

French were too weary of troubles to throw themselves into the arms of Mallet or his associate Lahorie, who had figured so disgracefully on the trial of Moreau. Yet, in spite of the evident impossibility of success, it must be confessed that considerable ingenuity and address marked the commencement of the conspiracy. On the 22d of October Mallet escaped from the hospital house and went to Colonel Soulier, who commanded the tenth cohort of the National Guard, whose barracks were situated exactly behind the hospital house. Mallet was loaded with a parcel of forged orders which he had himself prepared. He introduced himself to Soulier under the name of General La Matte, and said that he came from General Mallet.¹

Colonel Soulier on hearing of the Emperor's death was affected to tears. He immediately ordered the adjutant to assemble the cohort and obey the orders of General La Motte, to whom he expressed his regret for being himself too ill to leave his bed. It was then two o'clock in the morning, and the forged documents respecting the Emperor's death and the

¹ General Mallet gave out that the Emperor was killed under the walls of Moscow on the 8th of October; he could not take any other day without incurring the risk of being contradicted by the arrival of the regular courier. The Emperor being dead, he concluded that the Senate ought to be invested with the supreme authority, and he therefore resolved to address himself in the name of that body to the nation and the army. In a proclamation to the soldiers he deplored the death of the Emperor; in another, after announcing the abolition of the Imperial system and the Restoration of the Republic, he indicated the manner in which the Government was to be reconstructed, described the branches into which public authority was to be divided, and named the Directors. Attached to these different documents there appeared the signatures of several Senators whose names he recollected but with whom he had ceased to have any intercourse for a great number of years. These signatures were all written by Mallet, and he drew up a decree in the name of the Senate, and signed by the same Senators, appointing himself Governor of Paris, and commander of the troops of the first military division. He also drew up other decrees in the same form, which purported to promote to higher ranks all the military officers intended to make instruments in the execution of his enterprise.

He ordered one regiment to close all the barriers of Paris, and to allow no person to pass through them. Till this was done; so that in all the neighboring towns from which assistance, in case of need, might have been obtained, nothing was known of the transactions in Paris. He sent the other regiments to occupy the Bank, the Treasury, and different Ministerial Offices. At the Treasury some resistance was made. The Minister of that Department was on the spot, and he employed the guard of his household in maintaining his authority. But in the whole of the two regiments of the Paris Guard not a single objection was started to the execution of Mallet's order* (*Memoirs of the Due de Rovigo*, tome vi. p. 20).